

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 202460

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EA/EX- MR. MILLS (DRAFT)

EA/IMS - MR. SHEPARD (PHONE)

EB/EX - MR. DERTADIAN (INFO)

M/MO - R.G. MAYS, JR.

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: AODE, EAGR, SN

SUBJECT: MODE - FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL SERVICE PROPOSAL

TOESTABLISHAN AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE OFFICE IN SINGAPORE IN
FY 78

1. AS PART OF ITS FY 78 BUDGET PREPARATION THE FOREIGN
AGRICULTURAL SERVICE (FAS), DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,
IS PROPOSING TO ESTABLISH AN AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE OFFICE
AT THE AMERICAN EMBASSY IN SINGAPORE, STAFFED BY AN
AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE AND A FOREIGN NATIONAL PROFESSIONAL.

2. FAS' JUSTIFICATION FOR THE PROPOSAL IS AS FOLLOWS:
QUOTE. AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS IN SINGAPORE ARE HANDLED BY
THE AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE IN KUALA LUMPUR. THESE INTERESTS
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PAGE 02 STATE 202460

ARE VARIED AND ARE INCREASINGLY IMPORTANT TO THE PROMOTION

OF U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS. WITHIN THE PAST YEAR A SUCCESSFUL TRADE SHOW WAS HELD IN SINGAPORE AT WHICH 52 AMERICAN COMPANIES WERE REPRESENTED AND 35 AGENCY AGREEMENTS WERE SIGNED. ALSO 11 AMERICAN AND INTERNATIONAL TRADING COMPANIES, LARGELY GRAIN, ARE REPRESENTED IN THE MARKET AND WESTERN WHEAT ASSOCIATES, A USDA COOPERATOR, HAS A REPRESENTATIVE RESIDENT THERE. U.S. AGRICULTURAL EXPORTS IN 1974 TOTALED 43 MILLION DOLLARS OF WHICH ABOUT 12 MILLION DOLLARS WAS CONSUMER TYPE FOOD PRODUCTS. EXPORTS OF THESE

ITEMS, AS WELL AS BULK COMMODITIES, ARE EXPECTED TO INCREASE MATERIALLY IN THE FUTURE.

DURING SECRETARY BUTZ' VISIT TO SINGAPORE IN APRIL OF THIS YEAR, THE POSTING OF AN AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE TO SINGAPORE WAS DISCUSSED WITH AMBASSADOR HOLDRIDGE. AMBASSADOR HOLDRIDGE RECOGNIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF AGRICULTURE BUT POINTED OUT THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF SINGAPORE LIMITS THE NUMBER OF RESIDENT DIPLOMATS WHICH MAY DELAY MAKING SUCH AN ASSIGNMENT. HE ENCOURAGED US TO CONTINUE COVERAGE OF THIS MARKET BY OUR AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE IN KUALA LUMPUR BUT SUGGESTED THAT THE EMBASSY WOULD BE PLEASED IF USDA WOULD PLACE AN FSL IN SINGAPORE TO ASSIST THE ATTACHE AND PROVIDE CONTINUITY BETWEEN ATTACHE VISITS IN THE INTERIM. THE EMBASSY ECONOMIC SECTION WOULD GIVE DAY TO DAY SUPERVISION OF THIS EMPLOYEE AND CONTINUE TO ASSIST THE AGRICULTURAL ATTACHE AS NEEDED. END QUOTE.

3. COMMENTS OF COM ARE REQUESTED CONCERNING THE FAS PROPOSAL. A REPLY BY AUGUST 26 WILL BE APPRECIATED. DEPARTMENT WILL UTILIZE EMBASSY VIEWS IN COMMUNICATING TO BOTH FAS AND OMB ITS ASSESSMENT OF THIS FAS FY 78 BUDGET PROPOSAL. FYI. DEPARTMENT ALSO HAS STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT EXPANDING USG PRESENCE, PARTICULARLY DIPLOMATIC ELEMENTS. THUS UNLESS COM NOW SEES COMPELLING REASONS TO SUPPORT USDA REQUEST, WE PLAN TO DISAPPROVE ASSIGNMENT OF A RESIDENT ATTACHE. WE CAN SUPPORT A FOREIGN NATIONAL IF YOU ARE CONVINCED OF THE JUSTIFICATION. END FYI. ROBINSON

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